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Gates

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(54) **INFANT WALKER**

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A63B 22/00 (2006.01)
A61H 3/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **482/66**; 135/67

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 482/66–69; 472/1, 14–26; 297/344.1; 135/67
See application file for complete search history.

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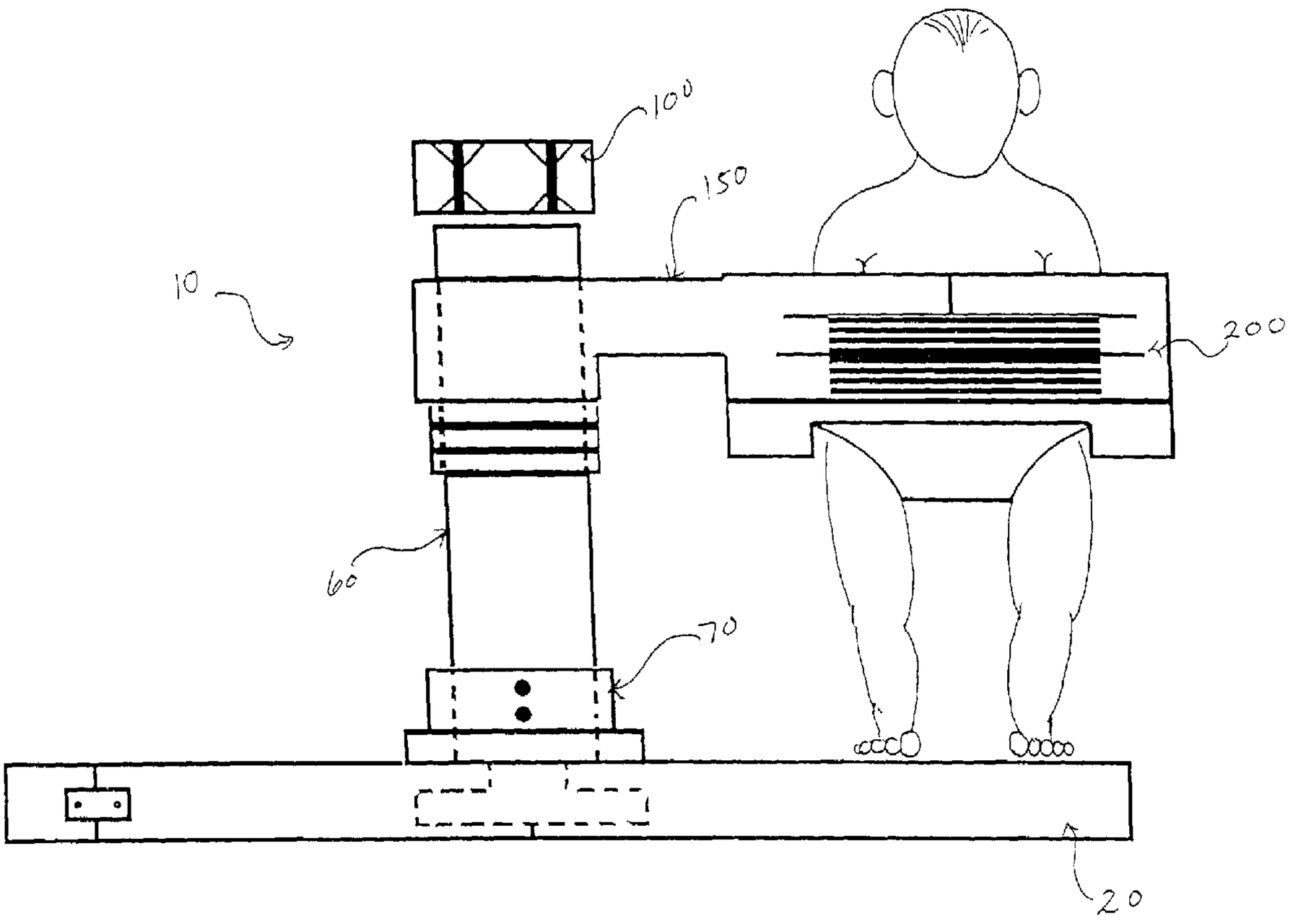
(57) **ABSTRACT**

An infant walker that provides a safe and confined mechanism in which a child may effectively development the requisite stability and/or balance for proper walking skills and associated motor coordination, and wherein the infant walker is aesthetically pleasing to promote eager utilization of the walker by a child.

9 Claims, 14 Drawing Sheets



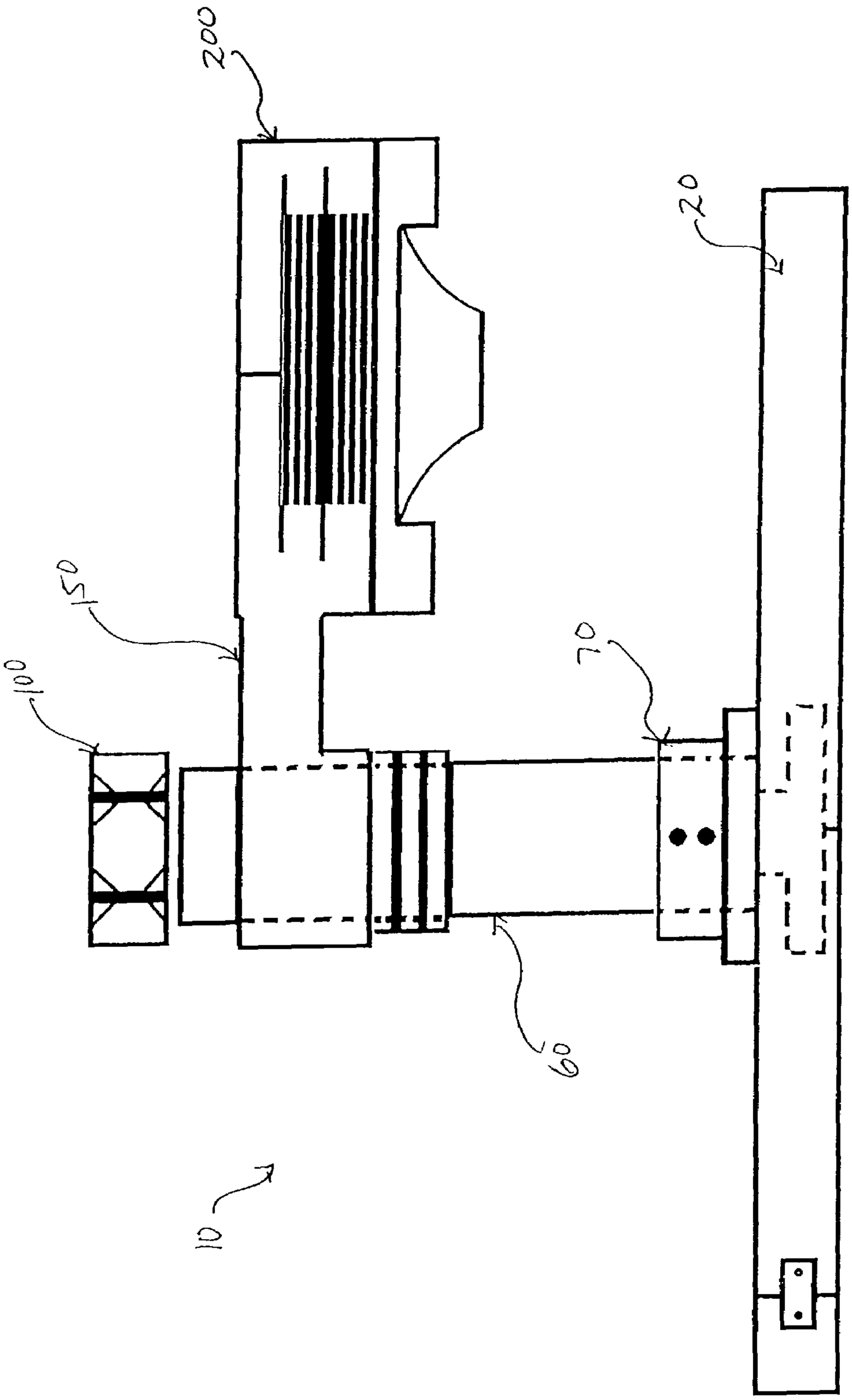


FIG. 1

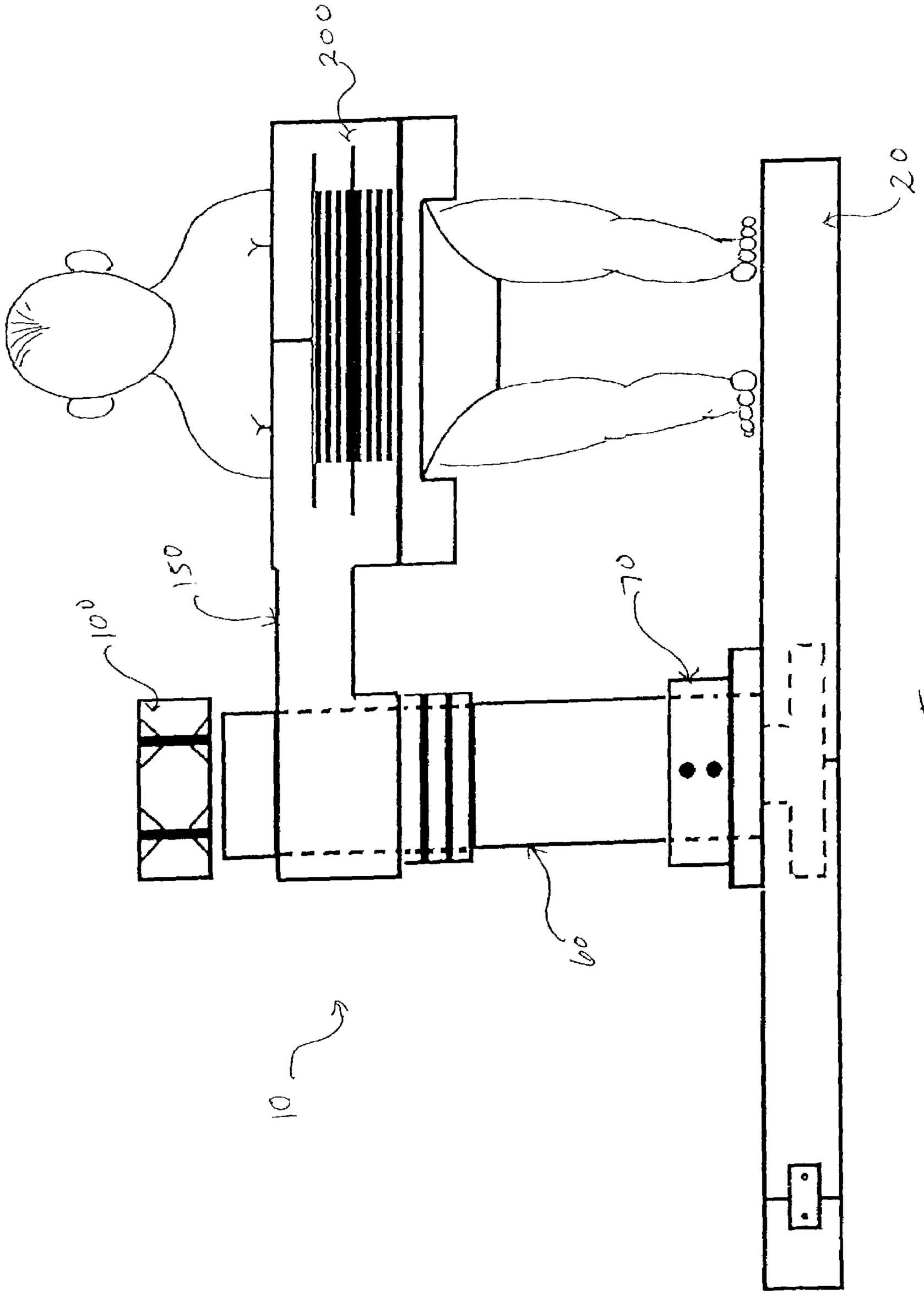


FIG. 2

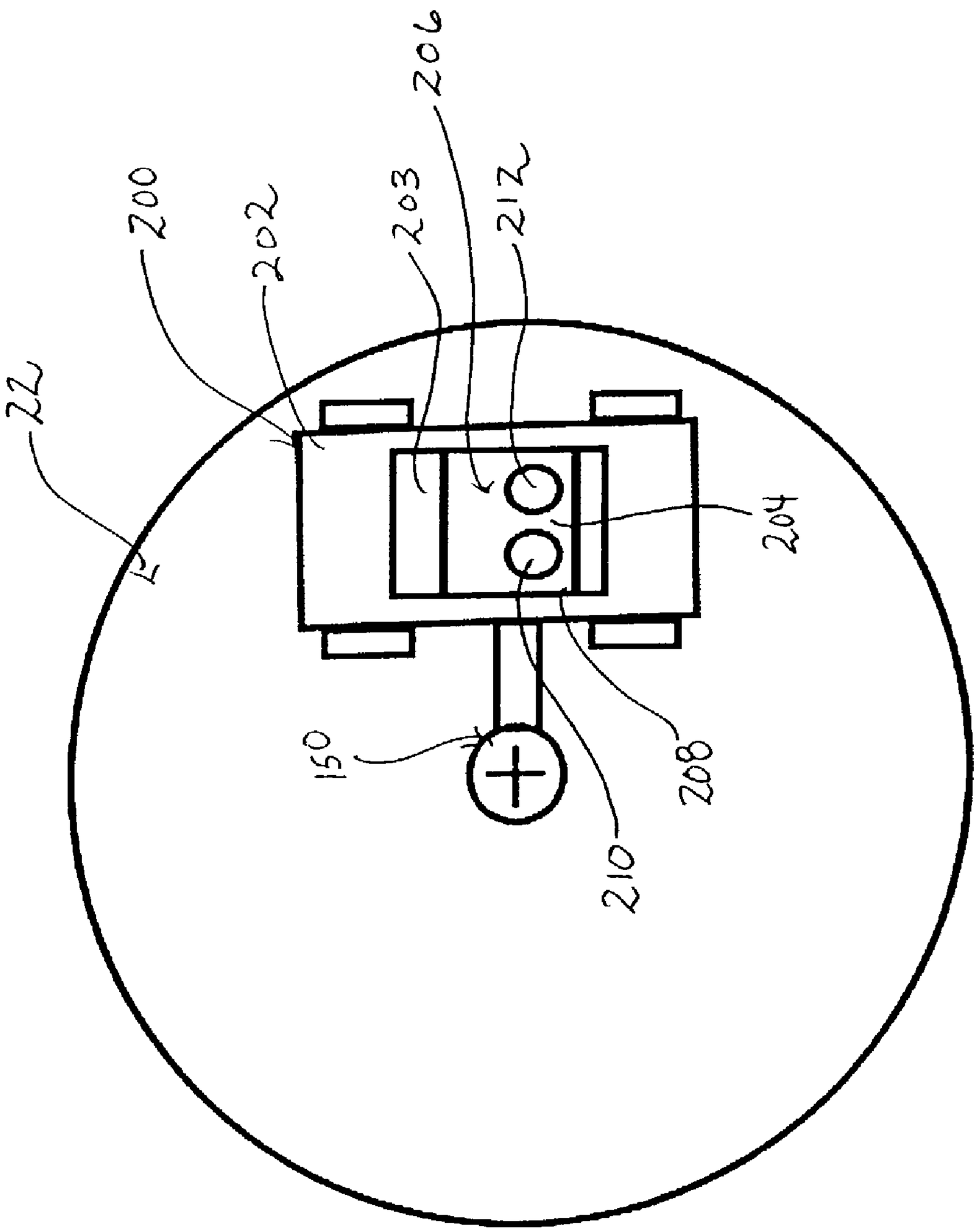
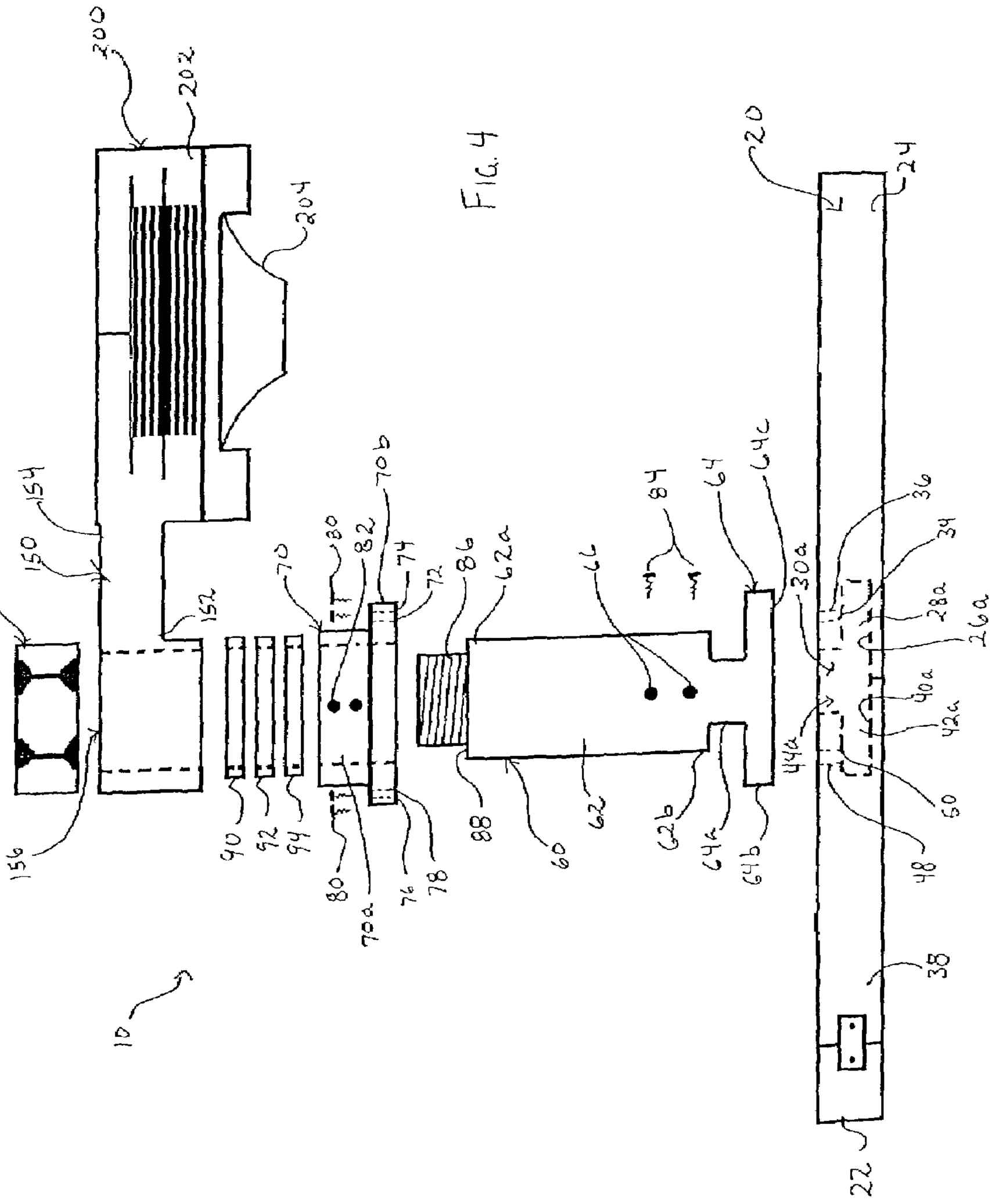


FIG. 3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70a
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88
90
92
94
60
62
62a
62b
64
64a
64b
64c
66
20
22
24
26a
28a
30a
34
36
38
40a
42a
44a
48
50

FIG. 4

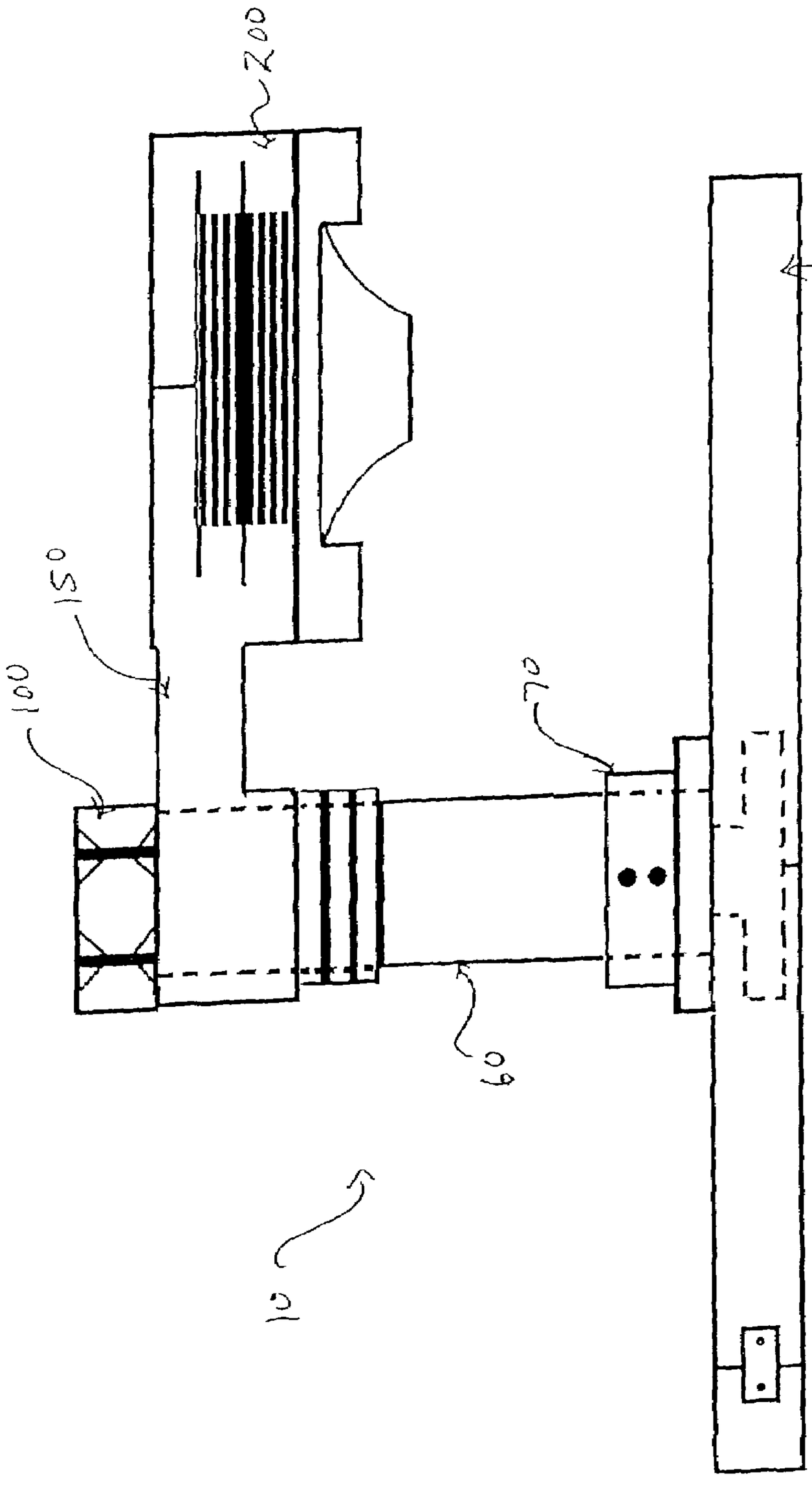


FIG. 5

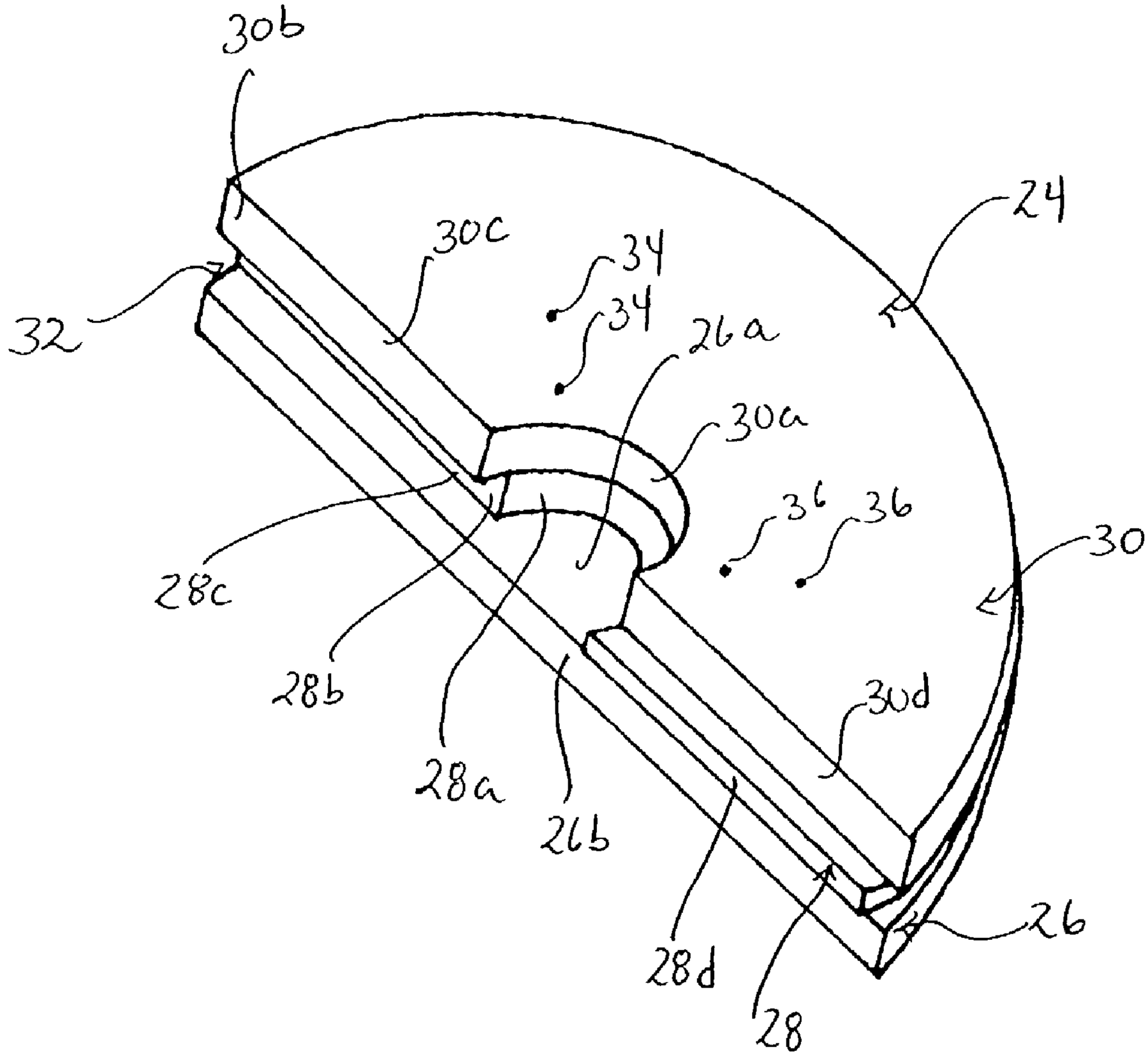


FIG. 6

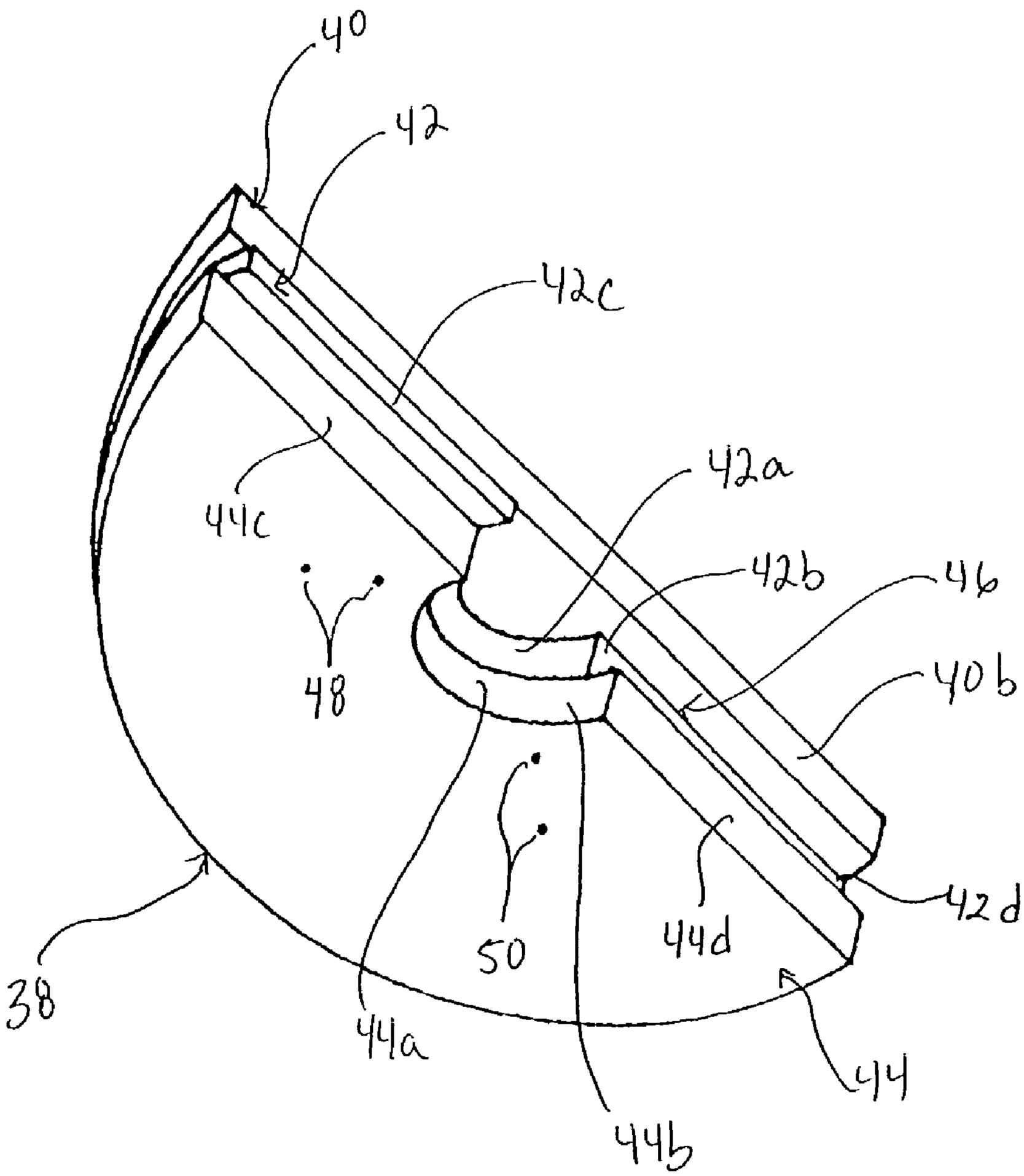


FIG. 6A

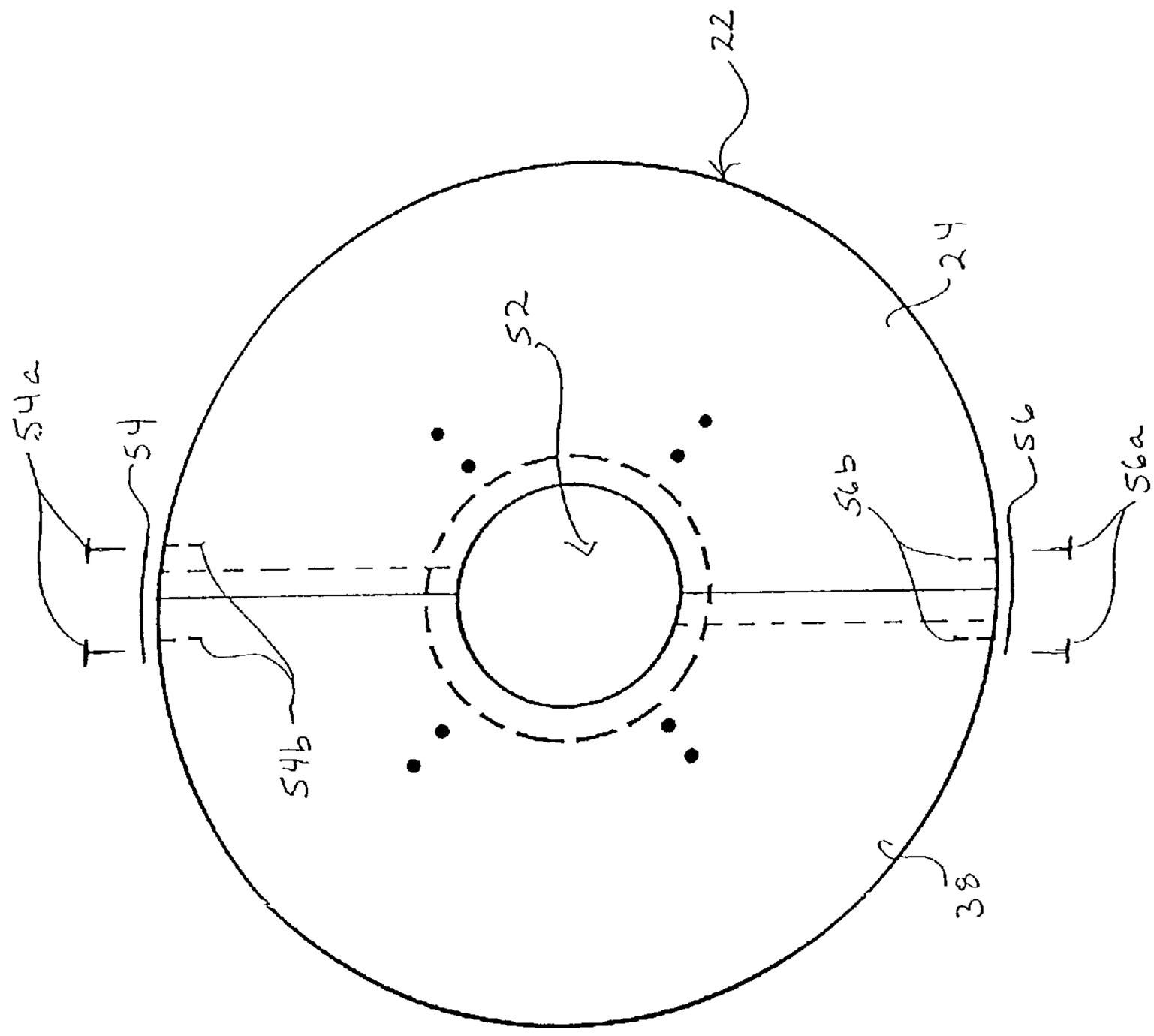


FIG. 7

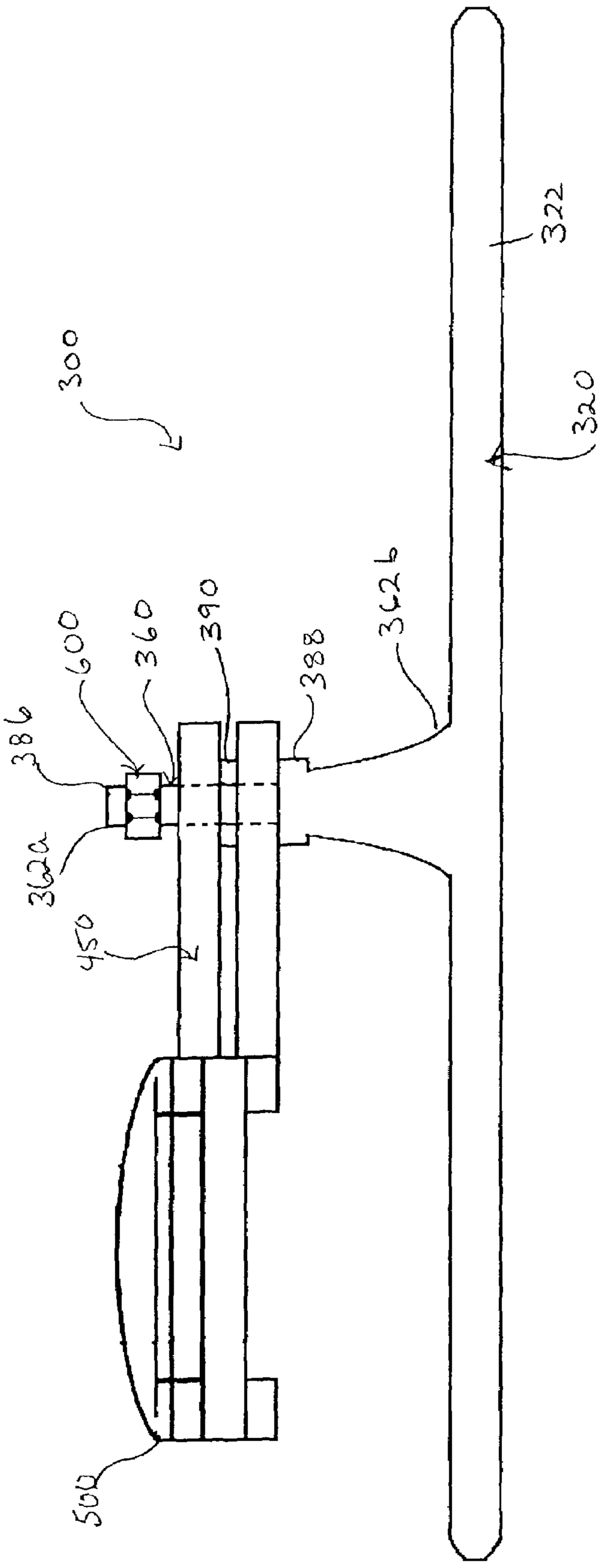


FIG. 8

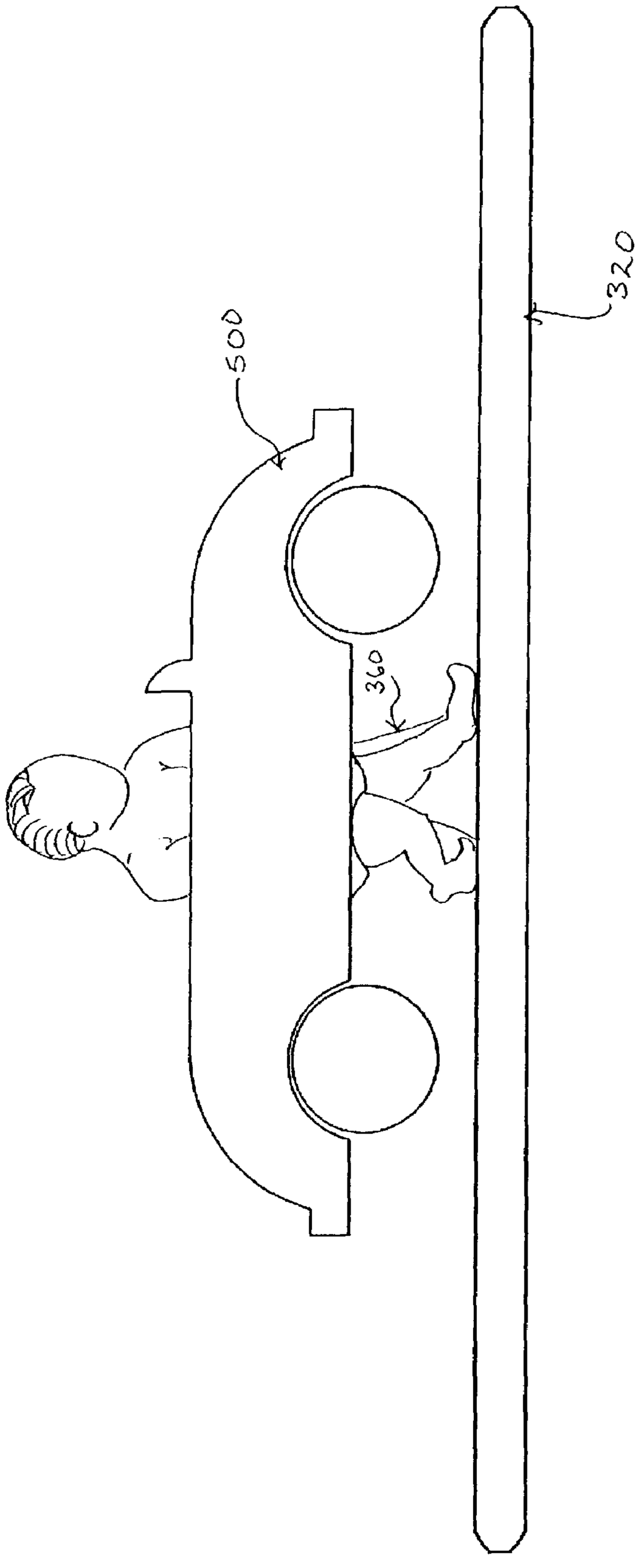
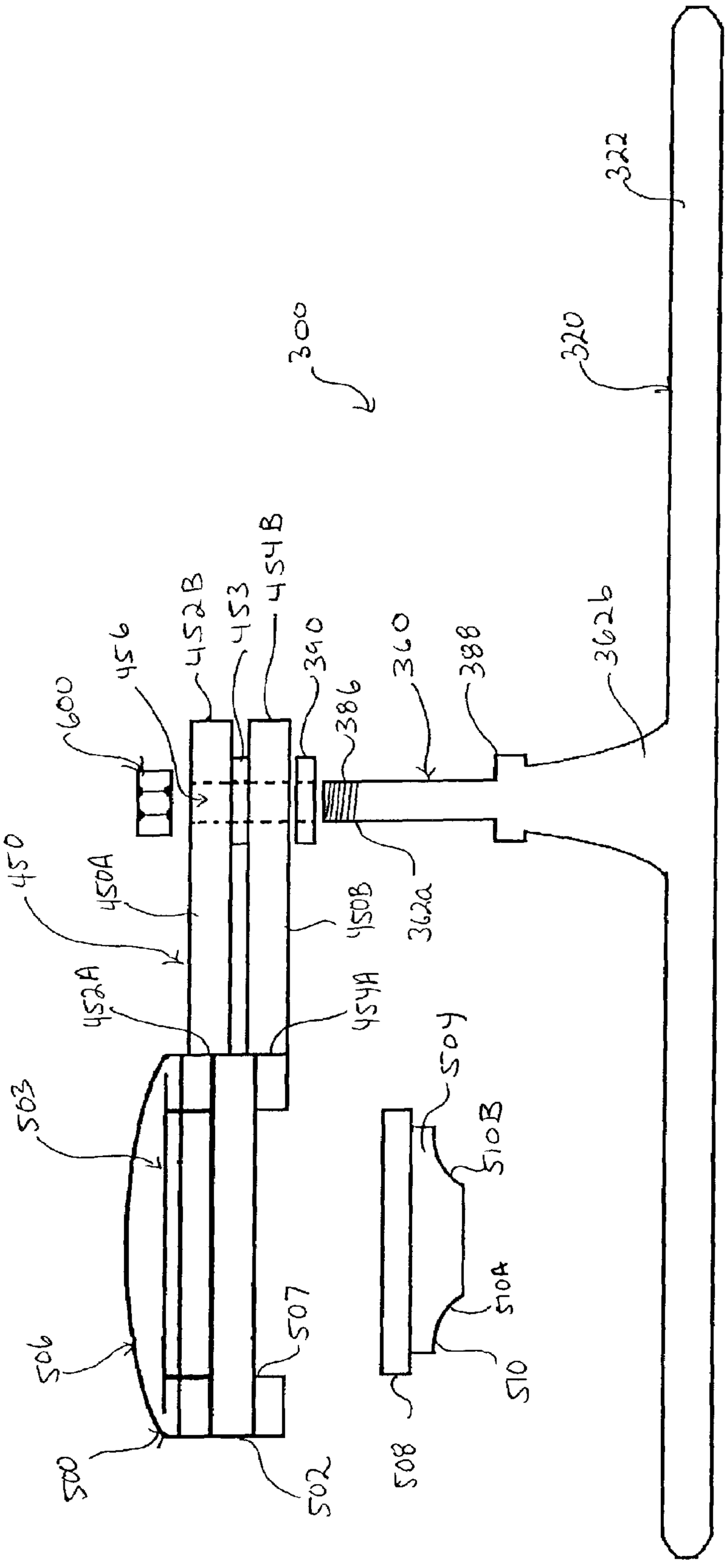


FIG. 9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452B
456
600
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450A
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362a
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454A
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502
508
504
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510B
510A

FIG. 10

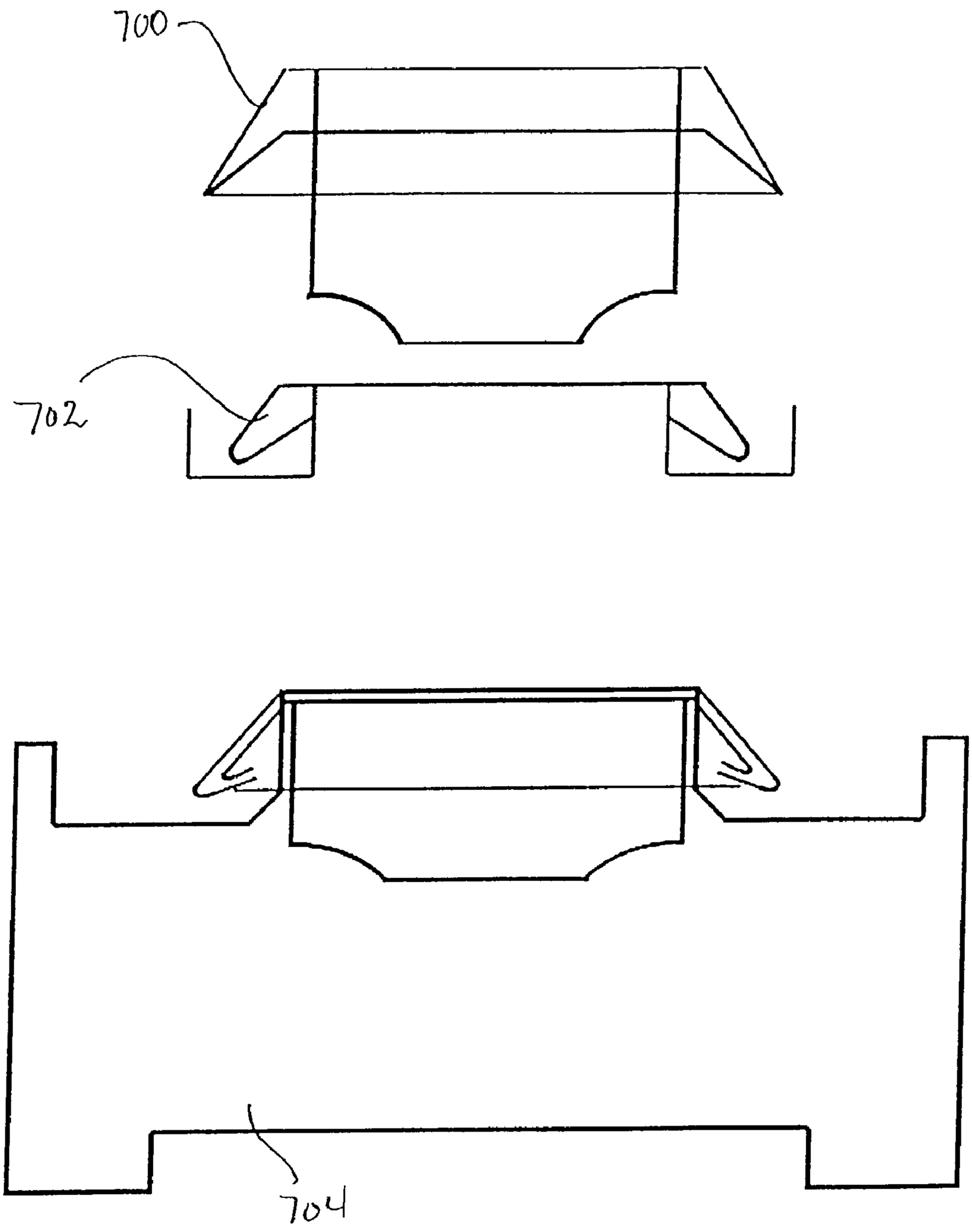

FIG. 11

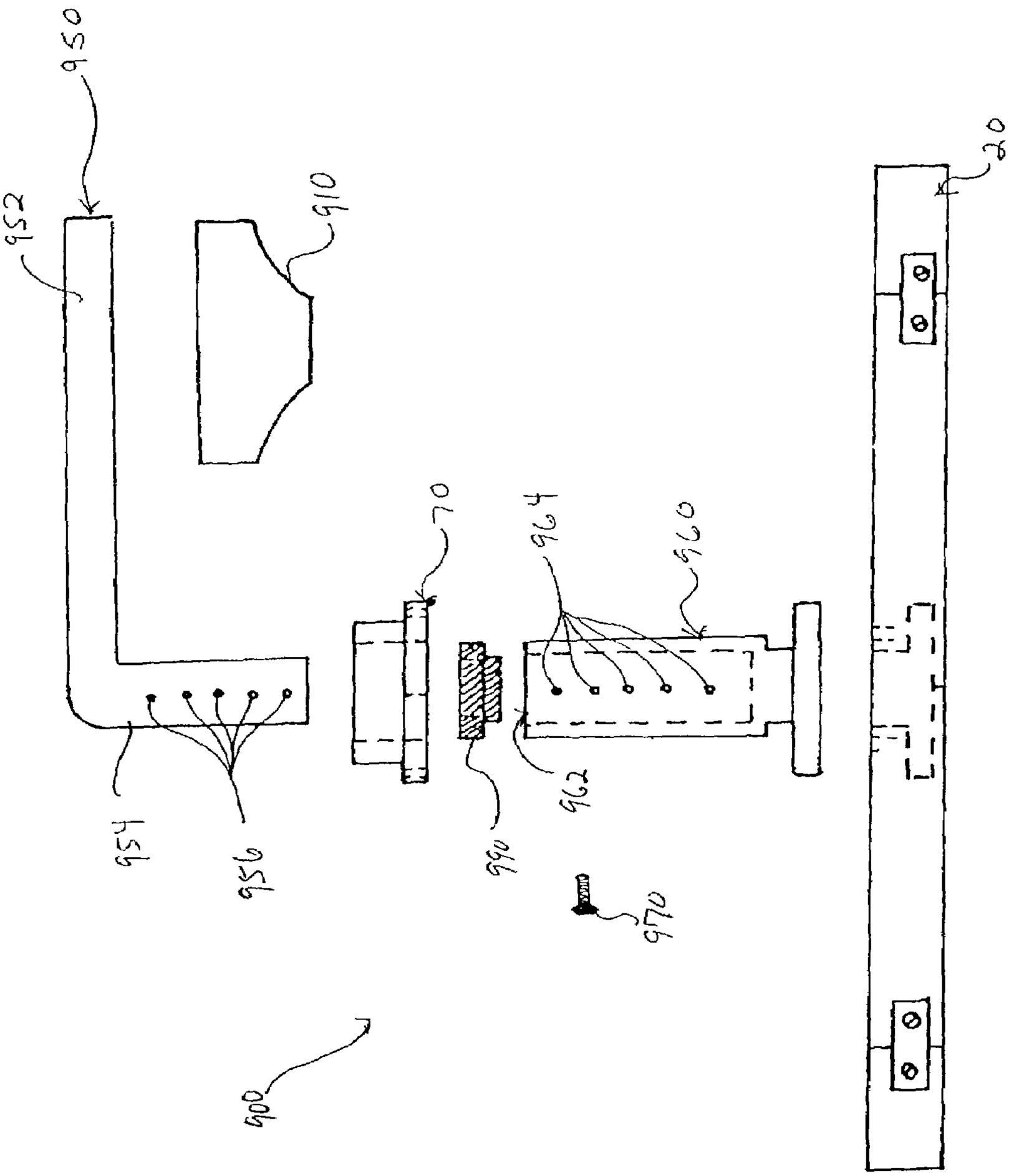

FIG. 12

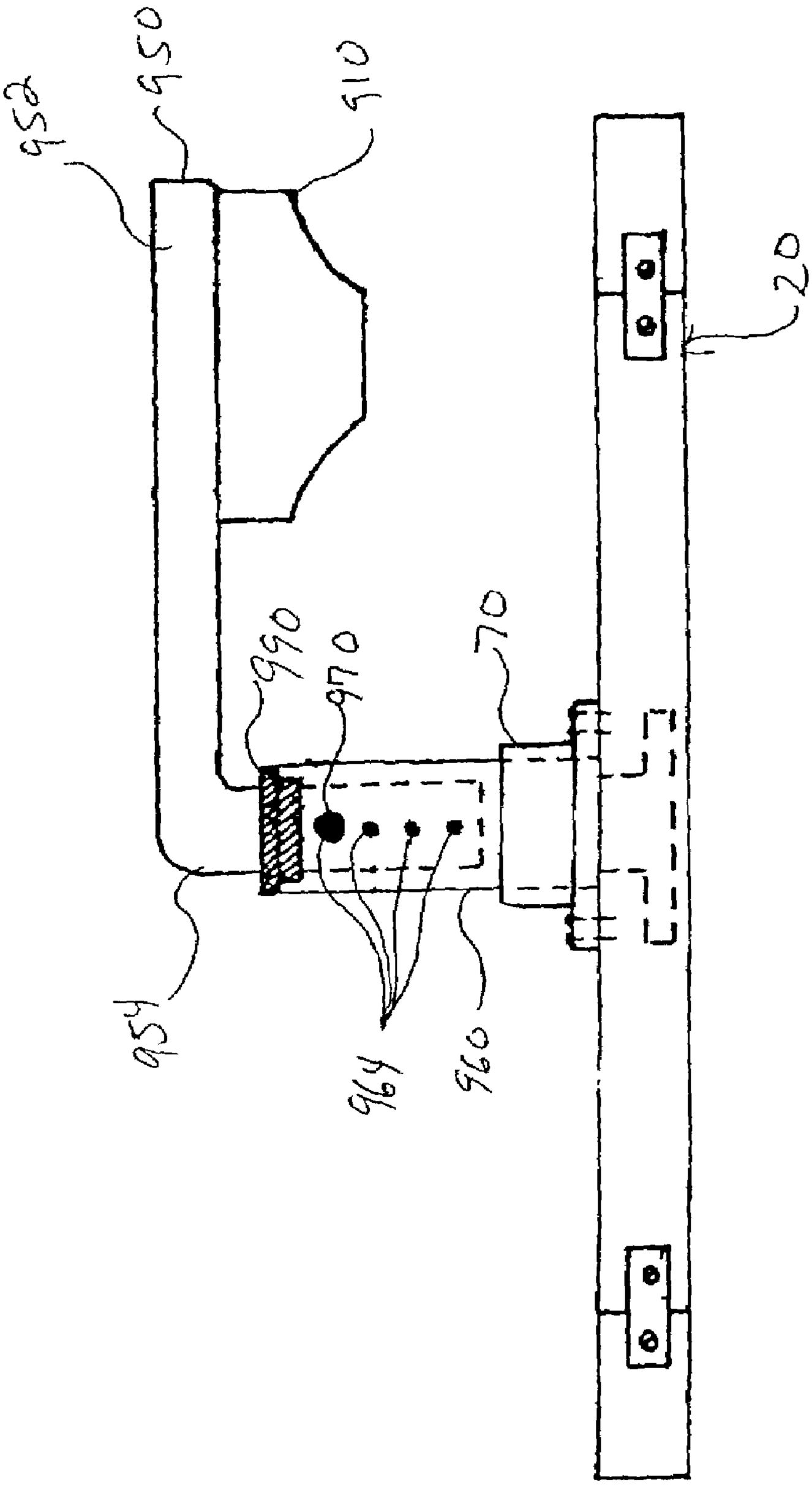

FIG. 13

INFANT WALKER

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates generally to infant motor skill development apparatuses, and more specifically to an infant walker. The present invention is particularly suitable for, although not strictly limited to, assisting and supporting an infant/child in his/her developmental walking stages.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Effective and timely development of infant motor skills is a crucial element in overall child development. As such, a variety of infant motor skill developmental apparatuses are readily available to assist children in the growth and development of such basic motor skills. In particular, infant walkers have long been utilized to promote stability and balance in assisting an infant child develop basic walking skills. In general, however, most such walkers possess inherent disadvantages that render their use problematic.

For instance, mobile walkers are disadvantageous, as they fail to confine a child to a safe and visible area, enabling the child/user to roam freely about the home and potentially expose him/herself to dangerous and/or unsafe conditions such as an open staircase leading to a lower level of the home, or a cabinet full of poisonous household cleaners and/or disinfecting solutions. Additionally, walker wheels possessing locking mechanisms are, in general, unsuccessful in preventing a child from freely roaming about the home, as the child usually possesses enough leg strength to counteract any tension/resistance delivered by the locked wheels. Furthermore, mobile walkers generally have a tendency to tip over if the child/user abruptly shifts his/her weight to one side of the walker or the other during movement of the walker, thus resulting in injury to the child's face, head, neck, spine and/or arms. Moreover, siblings within the vicinity of a moving walker are also subject to possible injury if struck thereby.

In addition to potential injury that a child/user may suffer, walls, baseboards and surrounding furniture are also subject to damage upon collision with the sides of a fast moving walker. Furthermore, hardwood floors and/or other hard-surface floorings tend to easily scuff, scratch, mark and/or dent as a result of the walker's hard plastic wheels frictionally rolling thereagainst, thus aging the floor far faster than anticipated.

Conventional infant walkers are further disadvantaged as they lack the optimal aesthetic appearance required to entice a child to utilize the walker. As such, a parent may often physically struggle with a resisting child when attempting to place the child within a walker, as the child is typically reluctant and/or unwilling to be placed within a seemingly uninviting confinement, thus hindering the parent from temporarily relieving him/herself of childcare duties.

Additionally, conventional infant walkers are equipped with wheels to assist in propelling the child/user across a surface. Such wheeled walkers, however, are disadvantageous, as they tend to overly assist a child in moving him/herself, preventing the child from fully utilizing his/her own leg muscles and thus, potentially protracting otherwise normal development of those leg muscles for independent, apparatus-free walking.

Therefore, it is readily apparent that there is a need for an infant walker that provides a safe, confined, stable and aesthetically pleasing mechanism for assisting and training a child in the effective development of his/her walking skills and associated motor coordination.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly described, in a preferred embodiment, the present invention overcomes the above-mentioned disadvantages, and meets the recognized need for such a device by providing an infant walker that provides a safe and confined mechanism in which a child may effectively develop the requisite stability and/or balance for proper walking skills and associated motor coordination, and wherein the infant walker is aesthetically pleasing to promote eager utilization of the walker by a child.

According to its major aspects and broadly stated, the present invention in its preferred form is an infant walker having a large base, a shaft centrally located on the base, an arm pivotally connected to the shaft and a seating assembly preferably in communication with the arm.

More specifically, the present invention is an infant walker having a large, flat, wide base that preferably functions as the walking platform, wherein the base preferably possesses a shaft centrally positioned thereon. A pivot arm, preferably perpendicularly and pivotally connected to the centrally positioned shaft, preferably possesses a seating assembly in communication therewith, wherein the pivot arm and communicating shaft preferably form a central axis in which a child placed within the seating assembly is able to walk in a complete circle relative to the central axis formed thereby. The infant walker further preferably possesses spacers that enable the height of the pivot arm and communicating seating assembly to be raised, wherein the seating assembly also possesses a swivel seat incorporated therein.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to effectively contribute to the growth and development of basic infant child walking skills and associated motor coordination, including the requisite stability and/or balance for proper walking.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to safely confine a child to a specified area and/or walking distance/parameters, thus permitting a parent to maintain his/her child within viewing distance/sight.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to prevent a child/user from roaming freely about the home and potentially exposing him/herself to dangerous and/or unsafe conditions such as an open staircase leading to a lower level of the home and/or a cabinet full of poisonous household cleaners and disinfecting solutions.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to entice a child to utilize the walker via the outwardly aesthetically inviting appearance of the walker, thus reducing the likelihood of a child physically struggling and/or resisting being placed within the walker by a parent.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its stationary nature, thus preventing damage to walls, baseboards and surrounding furniture typically resulting from the collision of a walker therewith.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its stationary nature, thus preventing hardwood floors and/or other hard-surface floorings from easily scuffing, scratching, marking and/or denting, wherein such damage typically results from a conventional walker's hard plastic wheels frictionally rolling thereagainst.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its large, wide base that prevents the walker from being tipped

over if the child/user abruptly shifts his/her weight to one side of the walker or the other during rotational movement of the walker.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to evenly distribute a child/user's weight during utilization of the walker by the child/user.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to permit a child/user to rotate within the seating assembly via an incorporated swivel seat.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to permit a child/user to rotate in either a forward or reverse direction.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to accommodate food, beverages and/or child toys via a tray incorporated into the seating assembly.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ability to be adjusted in height to accommodate the height of any child/user.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its portability.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ease of assembly.

A feature and advantage of the present invention is its ease of storage.

These and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent to one skilled in the art from the following description and claims when read in light of the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will be better understood by reading the Detailed Description of the Preferred and Alternate Embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawing figures, in which like reference numerals denote similar structures and refer to like elements throughout, and in which:

FIG. **1** illustrates an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **2** illustrates an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention showing a child/user situated therein.

FIG. **3** is a top view of an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **4** is an exploded view of an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **5** is an assembled view of an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **6** is a perspective view of a base portion of an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **6**A is a perspective view of a base portion of an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **7** is a top view of the base of an infant walker according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **8** illustrates an infant walker according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **9** illustrates an infant walker according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention showing a child/user situated therein.

FIG. **10** is an exploded view of an infant walker according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **11** is a side view of the swivel seat of an infant walker according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **12** is an exploded view of an infant walker according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **13** is an assembled view of an infant walker according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED AND ALTERNATIVE EMBODIMENTS

In describing the preferred and alternate embodiments of the present invention, as illustrated in FIGS. **1**–**13**, specific terminology is employed for the sake of clarity. The invention, however, is not intended to be limited to the specific terminology so selected, and it is to be understood that each specific element includes all technical equivalents that operate in a similar manner to accomplish similar functions.

Referring now to FIGS. **1**–**7**, the present invention in its preferred embodiment is an infant walker **10** having base assembly **20**, shaft assembly **60**, pivot arm **150** and seat assembly **200**, wherein shaft assembly **60** preferably extends perpendicularly from base assembly **20**, and wherein pivot arm **150** and seat assembly **200** are preferably in rotary communication with shaft assembly **60**, as more fully described below.

Referring now more specifically to FIGS. **4**–**7**, base assembly **20** preferably possesses a substantially circular-shaped disk-like platform **22**, wherein platform **22** preferably possesses first platform member **24** and second platform member **38**, and wherein first platform member **24** and second platform member **38** are preferably substantially semi-circular-shaped and preferably interlockingly engage to form platform **22**. Specifically, first platform member **24** preferably possesses lower portion **26**, middle portion **28** and upper portion **30**, wherein middle portion **28** is preferably positioned between lower portion **26** and upper portion **30**, and wherein lower portion **26**, middle portion **28** and upper portion **30** are preferably substantially semi-circular-shaped. Preferably, middle portion **28** possesses cutaway **28***a* formed along edge **28***b* of middle portion **28**, wherein cutaway **28***a* is preferably generally semi-circular-shaped to enable accommodation of shaft assembly **60** therein, as more fully described below. Similarly, upper portion **30** preferably possesses cutaway **30***a* formed along edge **30***b* of upper portion **30**, wherein cutaway **30***a* is preferably generally semi-circular-shaped to enable accommodation of shaft assembly **40** therein, and wherein cutaway **30***a* of upper portion **30** preferably possesses a smaller diameter than cutaway **28***a* of middle portion **28** for assistance in anchoring shaft assembly **60** therein as more fully described below. As a result of respective cutaways **28***a* and **30***a*, edge **28***b* of middle portion **28** preferably possesses ends **28***c* and **28***d*, and edge **30***b* of upper portion **30** preferably possesses ends **30***c* and **30***d*, wherein ends **30***c* and **30***d* of edge **30***b* of upper portion **30** are preferably flush with edge **26***b* of lower portion **26**. End **28***c* of edge **28***b* of middle portion **28** is preferably recessed within upper portion **30** and lower portion **26**, thus forming vacancy **32**. End **28***d* of edge **28***b* of middle portion **28** preferably slightly outwardly protrudes beyond upper portion **30** and lower portion **26**.

Formed preferably on upper portion **30**, proximal to end **30***c* of upper portion **30** and extending radially from cutaway **30***a* is first set of throughholes **34**, wherein second set of throughholes **36** is also preferably formed on upper portion **30**, proximal to end **30***d* of upper portion **30** and extending radially from cutaway **30***a*. Throughholes **34** and **36** preferably function to secure shaft assembly **60** to platform **22** of base assembly **20** as more fully described below.

Although lower portion **26**, middle portion **28** and upper portion **30** are preferably integrally formed together, it is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that lower portion **26**, middle portion **28** and upper portion **30** could be formed separately and then subsequently secured to one another via any suitable securing means as known within the art. Lower portion **26**, middle portion **28** and upper portion **30** are preferably formed from a durable plastic; although other suitable material could be used. Furthermore, although the overall preferred shape of platform **22** is circular, it is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that platform **22** could possess a different shape, such as, for exemplary purposes only, square, rectangular, diamond, oval and/or any other desired shape.

Similarly, second platform member **38** of platform **22** preferably possesses lower portion **40**, middle portion **42** and upper portion **44**, wherein middle portion **42** is preferably positioned between lower portion **40** and upper portion **44**, and wherein lower portion **40**, middle portion **42** and upper portion **44** are preferably substantially semi-circular-shaped. Preferably, middle portion **42** possesses cutaway **42***a* formed along edge **42***b* of middle portion **42**, wherein cutaway **42***a* is preferably generally semi-circular-shaped to enable accommodation of shaft assembly **60** therein, as more fully described below. Similarly, upper portion **44** preferably possesses cutaway **44***a* formed along edge **44***b* of upper portion **44**, wherein cutaway **44***a* is preferably generally semi-circular-shaped to enable accommodation of shaft assembly **40** therein, and wherein cutaway **44***a* of upper portion **44** preferably possesses a smaller diameter than cutaway **42***a* of middle portion **42** for assistance in anchoring shaft assembly **60** therein as more fully described below. As a result of respective cutaways **42***a* and **44***a*, edge **42***b* of middle portion **42** preferably possesses ends **42***c* and **42***d*, and edge **44***b* of upper portion **44** preferably possesses ends **44***c* and **44***d*, wherein ends **44***c* and **44***d* of edge **44***b* of upper portion **44** are preferably flush with edge **40***b* of lower portion **40**. End **42***c* of edge **42***b* of middle portion **42** preferably slightly outwardly protrudes from upper portion **44** and lower portion **40**. End **42***d* of edge **42***b* of middle portion **42** is preferably recessed within upper portion **44** and lower portion **40**, thus forming vacancy **46**.

Formed preferably on upper portion **44**, proximal to end **44***c* of upper portion **44** and extending radially from cutaway **44***a* is first set of throughholes **48**, wherein second set of throughholes **50** is also preferably formed on upper portion **44**, proximal to end **44***d* of upper portion **44** and extending radially from cutaway **44***a*. Throughholes **48** and **50** preferably function to secure shaft assembly **60** to platform **22** of base assembly **20** as more fully described below. Although lower portion **40**, middle portion **42** and upper portion **44** are preferably integrally formed together, it is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that lower portion **40**, middle portion **42** and upper portion **44** could be formed separately and then subsequently secured to one another via any suitable securing means as known within the art. Lower portion **40**, middle portion **42** and upper portion **44** are preferably formed from a durable plastic; although other suitable material could be used. Furthermore, although the overall preferred shape of platform **22** is circular, it is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that platform **22** could possess a different shape, such as, for exemplary purposes only, square, rectangular, diamond, oval and/or any other desired shape.

Upon interlockingly engaging first platform member **24** with second platform member **38**, edge **26***b* of lower portion **26** of first platform member **24** preferably contacts and abuts edge **40***b* of lower portion **40** of second platform member **38**; vacancy **32** of first platform member **24** preferably receives end **42***c* of edge **42***b* of middle portion **42** of second platform member **38**, thus permitting edge **42***b* thereof to contact edge **28***b* of middle portion **28** of first platform member **24**; vacancy **46** of second platform member **38** preferably receives end **28***d* of edge **28***b* of middle portion **28** of first platform member **24**, thus permitting edge **28***b* thereof to contact edge **42***b* of middle portion **42** of second platform member **38**; ends **30***c* and **30***d* of upper portion **30** of first platform member **24** preferably contact and abut ends **44***c* and **44***d*, respectively, of upper portion **44** of second platform member **38**; and cutaways **28***a* and **30***a* of middle portion **28** and upper portion **30**, respectively, of first platform member **24** preferably align with cutaways **42***a* and **44***a* of middle portion **42** and upper portion **44**, respectively, of second platform member **24**, thus forming cavity **52** for receipt therein of shaft assembly **60**, as more fully described below. To provide overall stability for platform **22**, brackets **54** and **56** are preferably secured to joined first platform member **24** and second platform member **38** via insertion of screws **54***a* and **56***a*, respectively through throughholes **54***b* and **56***b*, respectively, each opposingly formed on first platform member **24** and second platform member **38** as best illustrated in FIG. **7**.

Referring back to FIG. **4**, prior to interlockingly engaging first platform member **24** with second platform member **38** of platform **22** of base assembly **20**, shaft assembly **60** is preferably first positioned and secured therein. Specifically, shaft **62** of shaft assembly **60** is preferably generally cylindrically-shaped, having first end **62***a* and second end **62***b*, wherein second end **62***b* preferably possesses anchor member **64** in communication therewith. Anchor member **64** preferably possesses a cylinder portion **64***a* having a smaller diameter than shaft **62**, and a preferably flat disk portion **64***b* having a preferably larger diameter than both shaft **62** and cylinder portion **64***a*. Prior to securing first platform member **24** to second platform member **38**, disk portion **64***b* of anchor member **64** is preferably received within the confines of cutaways **28***a* and **42***a* of middle portions **28** and **42**, respectively, of first platform member **24** and second platform member **38**, respectively, created upon the joining of first platform member **24** with second platform member **38**; and cylinder portion **64***a* of anchor member **64** is preferably received within the confines of cutaways **30***a* and **44***a* of upper portions **30** and **44**, respectively, of first platform member **24** and second platform member **38**, respectively, created upon the joining of first platform member **24** with second platform member **38**, wherein bottom surface **64***c* of disk portion **64***b* preferably contacts and abuts top surfaces **26***a* and **40***a* of lower portions **26** and **40**, respectively, of first platform member **24** with second platform member **38**, respectively, thus further buttressing shaft **62** therein.

Preferably formed proximal to end **62***b* of shaft **62** are throughholes **66** for securing sleeve **70** thereto, wherein sleeve **70** preferably possesses a cylinder portion **70***a* and a preferably flat disk portion **70***b*, wherein cylinder portion **70***a* and disk portion **70***b* preferably possess a diameter dimensioned so as to allow sleeve **70** to slidably engage shaft **62** and be secured to platform **22**. Specifically, disk portion **70***b* preferably possesses throughholes **72** and **74** that preferably align with throughholes sets **34** and **36**, respectively, of first platform member **24**, wherein disk portion **70***b* further preferably possesses throughholes **76** and **78** that preferably align with throughholes sets **48** and **50**, respectively, of second platform member **38**, and wherein screws **80** are preferably inserted through through-

holes **72**, **74**, **76** and **78** of sleeve **70** and threaded throughhole sets **34**, **36**, **48** and **50** of platform **22** for securement of shaft **62** thereto. Cylinder portion **70***a* of sleeve **70** preferably possesses throughholes **82** that preferably align with throughholes **66** of shaft **62**, wherein screws **84** are preferably inserted therethrough for added securement of sleeve **70** to shaft **62** and for overall stability of shaft **62** when attached to platform **22**. Shaft **62** and sleeve **70**, and shaft assembly **60** in general, are preferably formed from a durable plastic; although other suitable materials may be used.

Preferably, end **62***a* of shaft **62** of shaft assembly **60** possesses a threaded portion **86** in communication therewith, wherein threaded portion **86** preferably receives nut **100** for securing and/or maintaining pivot arm **150** and seat assembly **200** in rotary communication with shaft **62**, as more fully described below. Preferably, threaded portion **86** possesses a smaller diameter than shaft **62**, thus forming ledge **88**, wherein ledge **88** preferably serves as a buttress and/or stop for support thereon of pivot arm **150**, as more fully described below, and/or for support thereon of spacers **90**, **92** and **94**. Spacers **90**, **92** and **94** are preferably ring-like and preferably possess a diameter dimensioned to receive threaded portion **86** of shaft **62**, whereupon spacers **90**, **92** and **94** are subsequently brought to rest on ledge **88**. Spacers **90**, **92** and **94** are preferably utilized individually and/or in combination to manipulate the height of pivot arm **150** and communicating seat assembly **200** when pivot arm **150** is positioned thereon, as best illustrated in FIGS. **4**–**5**. Spacers **90**, **92** and **94** and nut **100** are preferably formed from a durable plastic; although other suitable materials may be utilized. It is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that any number of spacers may be utilized to adjust the overall height of pivot arm **150** and communicating seat assembly **200**.

Pivot arm **150** is preferably elongated rectangular-shaped, preferably possessing ends **152** and **154**, wherein end **152** preferably possesses circular-shaped aperture **156** formed therethrough and dimensioned to slidably engage threaded portion **86** of shaft **62**, and wherein end **154** is in communication with seat assembly **200**, as best illustrated in FIGS. **4**–**5**. Aperture **156** of pivot arm **150** preferably enables pivot arm **150** to completely rotate and/or pivot around shaft **62**. Pivot arm **150** is preferably formed from a durable plastic; although other suitable materials may be utilized.

End **154** of pivot arm **150** is preferably in communication with seating assembly **200**, wherein seating assembly **200** preferably possesses walker body **202** and seat **204**. Walker body **202** is preferably shaped as an automobile so as to entice a child to utilize infant walker **10** as a result of the outwardly aesthetically inviting appearance of walker body **202**, wherein the conventional location of an automobile dashboard is preferably replaced by tray **203** in walker body **202**, and wherein tray **203** preferably functions to receive and support toys, food and/or beverages place thereon. Although the preferred shape and/or appearance of walker body **202** is that of an automobile, it is contemplated that walker body **202** could possess other shapes and/or appearances, such as, for exemplary purposes only, an airplane, boat, train, motorcycle, animal and/or a conventional walker shape/appearance. Walker body **202** further preferably possesses inner space **206**, wherein inner space preferably accommodates seat **204**.

Specifically, seat **204** is preferably formed from a soft malleable material, such as, for exemplary purposes, cotton and/or other suitable material as known within the art, wherein seat **204** is preferably attached to inner sides **208** of walker body **20** via any suitable attaching means as known within the art, such as, for exemplary purposes only, stitching, riveting and/or integrally formed therewith. Seat **204** further preferably possesses leg throughholes **210** and **212** formed therethrough for accommodation of a child/user's legs therethrough.

Referring now to FIGS. **8**–**11**, the present invention in an alternate embodiment is an infant walker **300** having base assembly **320**, shaft member **360**, pivot arm **450** and seat assembly **500**, wherein shaft member **360** extends perpendicularly from base assembly **320**, and wherein pivot arm **450** and seat assembly **500** are in rotary communication with shaft assembly **360**, as more fully described below.

Base assembly **320** possesses a substantially circular-shaped disk-like platform **322**, wherein platform **322** possesses centrally positioned and integrally formed shaft member **360** extending perpendicularly therefrom, wherein shaft member **360** is generally cylindrically-shaped, having first end **362***a* and second end **362***b*, and wherein second end **362***b* is in integral communication with platform **322**. End **362***a* of shaft member **360** possesses a threaded portion **386** in communication therewith, wherein threaded portion **386** receives nut **600** for securing and/or maintaining pivot arm **450** and seat assembly **500** in rotary communication with shaft member **360**.

Formed proximal end **362***b* of shaft member **360** is ledge **388**, wherein ledge **388** serves as a buttress and/or stop for support thereon of pivot arm **450**, as more fully described below, and/or for support thereon of spacer **390**. Spacer **390** is ring-like and possesses a diameter dimensioned to receive shaft member **360**, whereupon spacer **390** is subsequently brought to rest on ledge **388**. Spacer **390** is utilized to manipulate the height of pivot arm **450** and communicating seat assembly **500** when pivot arm **450** is positioned thereon, as best illustrated in FIGS. **8**–**9**. It is contemplated in another alternate embodiment that any number of spacers may be utilized to adjust the overall height of pivot arm **450** and communicating seat assembly **500**.

Referring now to FIG. **10**, pivot arm **450** is elongated rectangular-shaped, possessing first pivot arm **450**A and second pivot **450**B, wherein first pivot arm **450**A possesses ends **452**A and **452**B, and wherein second pivot **450**B possesses ends **454**A and **454**B. First pivot arm **450**A and second pivot **450**B are separated via spacer **453**, wherein ends **452**B and **454**B and spacer **453** possess shared circular-shaped aperture **456** formed therethrough and dimensioned to slidably engage threaded portion **386** and shaft member **360**, and wherein ends **452**A and **454**A are in communication with seat assembly **500**, as best illustrated in FIG. **10**. Aperture **456** of pivot arm **450** enables pivot arm **450** to completely rotate and/or pivot around shaft member **360**.

Ends **452**A and **454**A of pivot arm **450** are in communication with seating assembly **500**, wherein seating assembly **500** possesses walker body **502** and seat **504**. Walker body **502** is shaped as an automobile so as to entice a child to utilize infant walker **300** as a result of the outwardly aesthetically inviting appearance of walker body **502**, wherein the conventional location of an automobile dashboard is replaced by tray **503** in walker body **502**, and wherein tray **503** functions to receive and support toys, food and/or beverages place thereon. Although the shape and/or appearance of walker body **502** is that of an automobile, it is contemplated that walker body **502** could possess other shapes and/or appearances, such as, for exemplary purposes only, an airplane, boat, train, motorcycle, animal and/or a

conventional walker shape/appearance. Walker body **502** further possesses inner space **506**, wherein inner space accommodates seat **504**.

Specifically, seat **504** possesses a ring-shaped rotary member **508** and seat section **510** formed from a soft malleable material, such as, for exemplary purposes, cotton and/or other suitable material as known within the art, wherein rotary member **508** permits the stationary swivel of a child within walker body **502**, and wherein rotary member **508** is rotatably engaged to inner sides **507** of walker body **502** via any suitable means/mechanism as known within the art, such as, for exemplary purposes only, any suitable rotary mechanism and/or ball-bearing mechanism. Seat section **510** further possesses leg throughholes **510**A and **510**B formed therethrough for accommodation of a child/user's legs therethrough. As best illustrated in FIG. **11**, a swivel seat **700** could rotatably engage a protrusion **702** formed in walker body **704** in a snap-fit manner, thereby allowing an infant to swivel therein.

Referring now to FIGS. **12**–**13**, the present invention in an alternate embodiment is an infant walker **900** having base assembly **20**, shaft member **960**, pivot arm **950** and seat **910**, wherein shaft member **960** extends perpendicularly from base assembly **20**, and wherein pivot arm **950** and seat **910** are in rotary communication with shaft assembly **960**, as more fully described below.

Shaft member **960** is cylindrical-shaped and possesses channel **962** for recession therein of pivot arm **950**, as more fully described below. Channel **962** is further dimensioned to receive ring-like spacer **990** therein for the manipulation of the height of pivot arm **950** and communicating seat **910** relative to base assembly **20**. Formed on shaft member **960** is a plurality of aligned throughholes **964** that are aligned with throughholes **956** formed on pivot arm **950** for adjustment of the height of pivot arm **950** relative to base assembly **20**, as more fully described below. Shaft member **960** is rotationally secured within base assembly **20**.

Pivot arm **950** of walker **900** is L-shaped, possessing first portion **952** and second portion **954**, wherein first portion **952** is parallel to base assembly **20** and is in communication with seat **910**, and wherein second portion **954** is perpendicular to base assembly **20** and dimensioned to recess and freely rotate within channel **962** of shaft member **960**. Formed on second portion **954** of pivot arm **950** is a plurality of aligned throughholes **956** that align with plurality of throughholes **964** of shaft member **960** upon insertion of second portion **954** into channel **962** of shaft member **960**. As such, utilization of bolt **970** permits the adjustment of the height of pivot arm **950** relative to base assembly **20** via the insertion of bolt **970** through one of plurality of throughholes **964** of shaft member **960** and then through one of plurality of throughholes **956** of pivot arm **950**.

It is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that device **10** could possesses interchangeable seats of the non-swivel and swivel types.

It is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that base assembly **20** of device **10** could be separated into any number of joinable sections.

It is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that pivot arm **150** and/or seat **204** could possesses spring-mechanisms to permit a child/user to bounce within walker body **202**.

Having thus described exemplary embodiments of the present invention, it should be noted by those skilled in the art that the within disclosures are exemplary only, and that various other alternatives, adaptations, and modifications may be made within the scope of the present invention. Accordingly, the present invention is not limited to the specific embodiments illustrated herein, but is limited only by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An infant walker comprising, a base, a vertical shaft having a lower end connected to said base, and an upper end having a reduced cross-section; means for supporting an infant over said base, wherein said means for supporting comprises a body, said body comprising at least one seat selected from a group consisting of at least one stationary seat and at least one swivel seat, wherein said body interchangeably receives said at least one stationary seat and said at least one swivel seat, and wherein said means for supporting an infant is carried by said base to enable the infant to travel over said base when said infant walker is in use, the means for supporting an infant further comprising at least one arm having a first end pivotally connected to the upper end of the vertical shaft, and an opposing second end in communication with said body, and a plurality of spacers removably engaging the upper end of the vertical shaft for raising the height of said means for supporting an infant relative to said base.

2. The infant walker of claim **1**, wherein said base is at least one stationary platform.

3. The infant walker of claim **1**, wherein said body comprises a shape selected from the group consisting of automobiles, airplanes, boats, trains, motorcycles, and animals.

4. An infant walker comprising, a base, a vertical shaft having a lower end connected to the base, and an upper end having a reduced cross-section, means for supporting an infant over said base, wherein said means for supporting comprises a body, said body comprising at least one stationary seat interchangeable with at least one swivel seat, and wherein said means for supporting an infant is carried by said base to enable the infant to travel over said base when said infant walker is in use, the means for supporting an infant further comprising at least one arm having a first end pivotally connected to the upper end of the vertical shaft, and an opposing second end in communication with said body, and a plurality of spacers removably engaging the upper end of the vertical shaft for raising the height of said means for supporting an infant relative to said base.

5. The infant walker of claim **4**, wherein said base is at least one stationary platform.

6. The infant walker of claim **4**, wherein said body comprises a shape selected from the group consisting of automobiles, airplanes, boats, trains, motorcycles, and animals.

7. A method for enhancing the development of infant motor skills and coordination, comprising the steps of:

a. obtaining an infant walker, said infant walker comprising:

a base, a vertical shaft having a lower end connected to said base, and an upper end having a reduced cross-section, means for supporting an infant over said base, wherein said means for supporting comprises a body, said body comprising at least one seat selected from a group consisting of at least one stationary seat and at least one swivel seat, wherein said body interchangeably receives said at least one stationary seat and said at least one swivel seat, and wherein said means for supporting an infant is carried by said base to enable the infant to travel over said base when said infant walker is in use, the means for supporting an infant further comprising at least one arm having a first end pivotally connected to the upper end of the vertical shaft, and an

opposing second end in communication with said body, and a plurality of spacers removably engaging the upper end of the vertical shaft for raising the height of said means for supporting an infant relative to said base;

b. placing an infant within said means for supporting an infant; and

c. permitting the infant to utilize leg and body muscular strength to advance himself within said infant walker in a forward and reverse rotational movement over said base.

8. The method of claim **7**, wherein said body comprises a shape selected from the group consisting of automobiles, airplanes, boats, trains, motorcycles, and animals.

9. The method of claim **7**, further comprising the step of increasing the height of said means for supporting an infant relative to said base, wherein at least one spacer is placed on said vertical shaft.

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